

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

7A-15

Orleans

N

EAS.238

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Town/City: EASTHAM

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Campground Road Area

Photograph



Address: 5 Bay Road

Historic Name: Robert and Jennie Horton House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: ca. 1915

Source: Vital records, house marker, Eastham Tax Commitment Books

Style/Form: No Style

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Unknown

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
Small shed

Major Alterations (*with dates*):
New windows (post-2012)

Condition: Good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.18 acres

Setting: This property is located on a small parcel bounded on the east by Townsend Avenue and on the north by Bay Road. The surrounding area was subdivided with small cottage lots starting in the early-20th century, and now includes modest cottages and houses from the early-20th to the early-21st centuries. This house is set close to and faces Bay Road to the north. The parcel is landscaped with lawn around the house, and a combination wood board and split rail fence partially encloses the yard. A large clamshell parking area is located along Townsend Avenue.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant, for

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): April 2025

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

EASTHAM

5 BAY ROAD

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

This stylistic house is one of the larger early-20th century houses in the area. Its form consists of two 1½-story, gable-roofed blocks that are connected to form an L-shaped footprint. One-story additions with flat roofs extend from the north and south sides of the house, one or both of which may have begun as open porches. The west block has broad wall dormers on the north and south roof slopes.

The foundation material is not visible. The elevations are clad in weathered wood shingles with plain, painted wood trim. The roofs are clad in asphalt shingles with modestly-projecting roof eaves with simple box cornices. The house has an irregular pattern of window openings, all of which have been replaced with modern thermal windows. The window patterns of the original wood windows appear to have included 2/2 double-hung sash (see Photo 3).

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

Incorporated as Nauset Plantation in 1646, and changed to Eastham in 1651, Eastham territory originally extended south to Pleasant Bay in Orleans and north beyond Wellfleet Harbor. The early development pattern for what we now know as Eastham was impacted by its absence of deep-water harbor facilities. Relatively fertile soil led to dispersed agricultural settlement, but residential and commercial development was concentrated to the north at Wellfleet Harbor and to the south at Town Cove and Pleasant Bay. When the separate towns of Wellfleet and Orleans were created in the late-18th century, Eastham became and remained one of the least populated towns on the Cape throughout the 19th century.

In the 19th century, Eastham was the agricultural center of the Outer Cape. Crops evolved over time; corn and dairy were surpassed in the early-20th century by asparagus and turnips - two crops well suited for the sandy soil. In 1900, 58% of Eastham's workers were employed as farmers, but by 1930 that number had dwindled to 21%. Summer resort development, including cottage colonies and subdivisions of former farmland that would transform Eastham, had begun in earnest in the 1920s as middle-class access to car ownership increased and Cape roads were improved.

This property is connected to the cottage development around Campground Road - one of the three earliest roads to extend west to Cape Cod Bay from the central sections of Eastham. Despite the early development of the road, which was established to serve the Methodist camp meetings in the mid-19th century, the great majority of houses that border it, especially to the north, are 20th-century vernacular summer cottages and retirement houses.

One of the early subdivisions at the west end of Campground Road was recorded in 1912 by Alonzo K. Higgins. It consisted of 34 "Cottage Lots" on the north side of Campground Road that included what is now the southern portion of Bay Road and West Shore Drive (Figure 2).¹ Four large parcels were aligned along the bay while smaller lots with 75-foot frontages were laid out in the interior. All but one of the bay parcels have been divided into smaller lots; and some of the small interior lots have been combined. Eastham-born Alonzo K. Higgins (1846-1918) married Elizabeth W. Rogers (1847-1923) in Orleans in 1870. He was listed as a farmer in census records throughout his life, but he was also very active in cottage development in the early-20th century.

¹ Barnstable County Registry of Deeds, Plan Book 2/ Page 123.

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According to title research, the land on which this house was built was sold by Alonzo K. Higgins before he recorded the 1912 subdivision. In 1910, he sold a larger piece of land that included what became this parcel to Mary L. Mitchell of Boston.² In May, 1912, before the subdivision was recorded, Mitchell sold this land to Robert R. Horton of Eastham.³ The 1900 census shows Robert R. Horton on State Highway with his wife, Jennie, and four children - Robert Elwood (b. 1885), Carroll W. (b. 1886), Edwin Weston (b. 1888), and Philip Smith (b. 1892). Tax records for 1902 show Horton owning a house (probably 5050 State Highway, EAS.733) valued at \$1000 and "Excelsior Hall" (probably 5030 State Highway, EAS.732) valued at \$1000. The 1910 census shows the family in Eastham, but at some point between 1910 and 1917, the family moved to South Easton, where he worked as the railroad station agent in Easton Center and as an agent for Adams Express Company.

This house sits on Lot 21 of that 1912 subdivision. It has an Assessor date of 1920, and there is a freestanding house marker on site that says it was built in 1916. The annual Eastham Tax Commitment Books can assist in identifying when owners first built their houses. The Tax Commitment Books from 1903 to 1919 are missing, but in the 1920 Tax Book, a widowed Jennie Horton was assessed for a dwelling, poultry house and outbuilding. If that assessment refers to this house, and given that her husband died in 1917, a ca. 1915 construction date appears likely.

In 1928, Jennie A. (Landerkin) Horton sold properties that included this land, still with no specific reference to Lot 21, to Edith Dobson Duncan of Canton. She was the wife of Henry Duncan who owned a chain of hardware stores in the greater Boston area. They were both born in Ontario, Canada. He died in 1935, and she died in 1942. The following year, her estate sold this parcel – it was the first time the deed referenced Lot 21.

Interestingly, it was sold back into the Horton family. In 1943, it was sold to George L. Horton, Sr. of Eastham.⁴ He was not a direct descendant of the aforementioned Robert R. Horton. Rather, he was one of ten children to local fisherman Reuben Horton and his wife Cynthia. George L. Horton (1885-1948) married Nellie A Morrison (d. 1969) in Newton in 1911, and they lived in Newton throughout their lives. He worked in the beef industry as an inspector and then manager. This house stayed in the family until 1964 when it was sold to Helen E. and George S. Duffy, Sr. of Eastham.⁵

Subsequent owners included Wesley P. and Mildred S. Alvord of Bolton, CT, and joint owners Daniel and Carol Clapp of Marshfield and John and Elizabeth Skelton of Sharon. In 1998, then owner Dolores J. Kendall of Scarsdale, NY sold the house to the current owners, Andrew J. and Pamela B. Ponichtera of West Hartford, CT.⁶

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www.ancestry.com - Vital records.

² Barnstable County Registry of Deeds Book 303/ Page 218.

³ Book 316/ Page 392.

⁴ Book 600/ Page 207.

⁵ Book 1280/ Page 294.

⁶ Book 11489/ Page 231.

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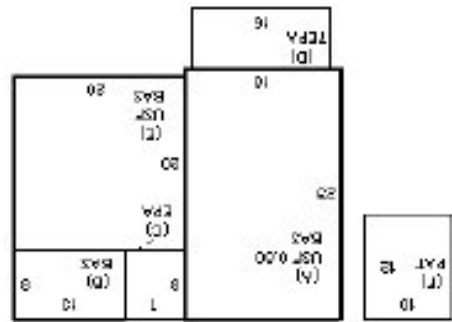


Figure 1. Assessor Sketch.



Photo 2. View from Bay Road, looking northwest.



Photo 3. View looking southwest (2012).

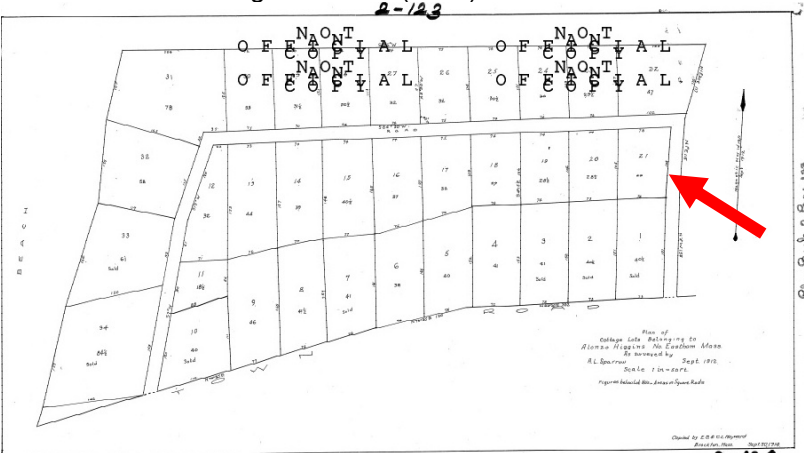


Figure 2. September 1912 Plan of Cottage Lots for Alonzo Higgins (arrow to Lot 21 added).